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# Oversight Unit Is Said to Pose 'Grave Risks'

By Spencer Rich  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Deputy Defense Secretary Robert F. Ellsworth has told the Senate that the resolution to create a committee on intelligence activities poses "grave risks" because it could lead to publication of what the nation spends for intelligence.

Ellsworth, in May 13 closed session testimony and in a May 14 letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee, that was released yesterday, said publication of just the overall figure for all U.S. intelligence operations each year could help foreign analysts figure out what the United States is doing.

He also said that the budgetary process for intelligence functions in the resolution—on which the Senate is expected to vote today—probably would lead to revelations about specific activities that could harm the United States.

Sen. Abraham A. Ribicoff (D-Conn.), chief sponsor of the resolution, said, "Ellsworth is all wrong. What he's saying is not in the resolution at all. It doesn't require publication at all. The Senate would have to decide to do it (publish the figure) and it would be decided in closed session."

At issue is a key section of the resolution, giving the new committee power to recommend spending ceilings for each of the intelligence agencies—Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Intelligence Agency, and intelligence functions of the FBI and Defense Department.

The resolution worked out by Ribicoff, Rules Committee Chairman Howard W. Cannon (D-Nev.), Senate Majority Whip Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.) and others, says that the Senate each year must set a budget ceiling before intelligence agencies can be voted funds. At present appropriations for the CIA are handled secretly by

the new intelligence committee itself over the authorizing function. It appears inevitable that it would prepare a table showing spending for each intelligence agency, and that the total might be published. He added that it appeared inevitable that in the course of debate "high technology" information-gathering systems, as well as details of other activities, would become public.

Cannon said yesterday that CIA Director George Bush also "has written a letter saying he's fearful of releasing hypersensitive because information could be 'extrapolated' by foreign defense analysts."

However, Ribicoff said there isn't any question that this information be made public: that the intelligence authorization could be done in closed session. Furthermore, he said, the Senate vote on the authorization measure could be in closed session. A senator would face censure for revealing the information, and a staff member could be punished for contempt and fired.

Pending before the Senate is a vote on whether to give the Armed Services Committee exclusive jurisdiction over the DIA, the NSA and military intelligence agencies, leaving the new committee budget authority for the CIA only.

Armed Services Chairman John C. Stennis (D-Miss.) and Sen. John Tower (R-Texas) have offered an amendment proposing this.

Under the resolution being debated, Armed Services shares jurisdiction with the new committee over military agencies. Under the amendment, Armed Services would have exclusive jurisdiction over 80 to 90 percent of the intelligence budget represented by the military agencies.

Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) yesterday obtained unanimous consent to five limits to debate. The vote today was rescheduled.